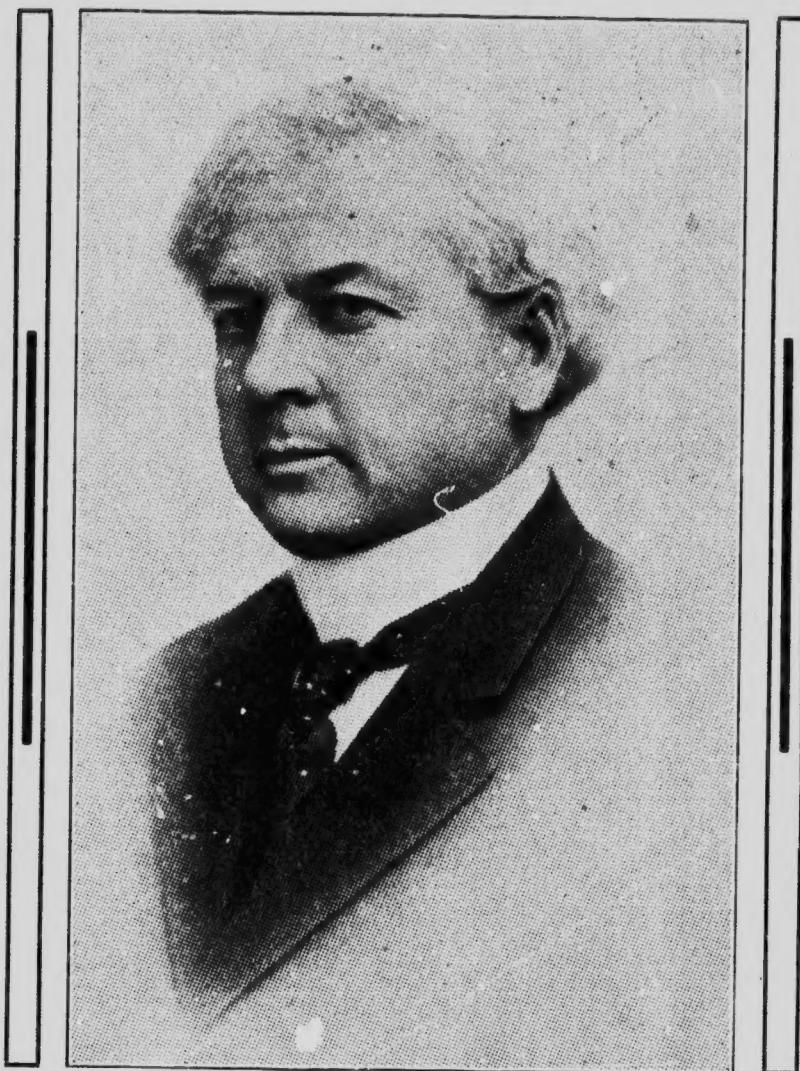




Premier McBride's Speech



On the Government's Railway Policy

1912

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A COMPREHENSIVE RAILWAY POLICY

NEW LINES OF COMMUNICATION WHICH DEVELOP ALL PARTS OF THE PROVINCE

**Reaching Towards Peace River—Opening
Vancouver Island—Joining Coast
and Kootenay**

5,000 MILES OF RAILWAY IN OPERATION IN 1915

(Reprinted from "Colonist," February 22nd, 1912)

The explanation and elaboration of the enlarged railway policy of the Government, by Premier McBride, occupied the close attention of Parliament and of crowded galleries during the entire afternoon sitting of the Legislature yesterday, the Premier speaking effectively upon the five several bills which were introduced in the House on Tuesday, and which are now on the orders for second readings, the debate upon each standing adjourned at the instance, respectively, of Mr. Brewster and of Mr. Williams. The First Minister was in excellent form and spoke extemporaneously with an enthusiasm and confidence in British Columbia's future which at times evoked pronounced enthusiasm. Taking up first the bill providing for construction of the Vancouver to Fort George railway, which is to bring the Coast into touch with the Peace River Country, the Prime Minister said:

WARRANTED BY DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Speaker: In rising to move the second reading of Bill No. 23, I would like to have the permission of the House to devote myself for a little time this afternoon to enlargement of the very brief explanation which I submitted yesterday in introducing the bills which are now before the House. Before doing so, however, I think it is perhaps but right that I should preface my remarks with the statement that the railway policy of the Government as at present agreed upon is one which we have decided upon in the first place because of the very great development that is to be noted in almost every section of the Province, in the next place because of the very obvious necessity for the provision of additional transportation facilities to assist and strengthen that development, and in the third place because of the near approaching completion of the Panama Canal, the construction of which we are all convinced will do so very much to promote the satisfactory development and prosperity of this section of America. It is now but two years since I last submitted to this Parliament certain measures making for the construction of needed railways in this Province. At that time we were all of the opinion that because of the prominence our Province is obtaining in the eyes of the world, the time was not far distant when we should have to ask Parliament to authorize further measures of a similar nature.

ADDED PROSPERITY

I am glad, indeed, that I am now in a position today to present a number of measures which I feel confident will make for new development and added prosperity in British Columbia in its every part. I can add but little to what I have so often said to Parliament and to the country on this subject. That the growth of British Columbia during recent years has been little short of phenomenal goes without saying. At the same time it may fairly and truthfully be said that this marvellous advance, when analyzed, is found to be based upon a sound, solid and substantial foundation. There is in this Province nothing that may be regarded as in the nature of a boom. There is nothing in British Columbia's present growth that is of a speculative character. The growth and progress that are now being noted make indisputably for permanency and a great future, and this cannot be questioned. In this connection we feel that we are entitled to, and we do take, some credit for the work of the Government in having in some degree been instrumental in the promotion of this development. And that we have not made this plea in vain has been established when we have submitted the question to the great jury of the country and we have come back to this House with added strength.

VANCOUVER-FORT GEORGE

With respect to the bill which is my pleasant duty now to submit for its second reading, it is in effect an agreement entered into between His Majesty the King as represented in and by the Province of British Columbia, and Messrs. Foley, Welch & Stewart, a prominent firm of contractors, with an unchallengeable standing as legitimate railway builders, a standing that cannot be called into question. These gentlemen have been entrusted by the Government of the Dominion with a major portion of the construction of the Grand Trunk Pacific line, and they have also carried to a successful conclusion contracts for the completion of large mileages for both the Canadian Pacific and the Canadian Northern systems. We are, therefore, not dealing with any strange combination, but, on the other hand, with gentlemen of proven ability to carry out such works as they may undertake and such as is involved in the building of the Vancouver, Howe Sound & Fort George railway line. In connection with the urgent necessity for a railway connecting Vancouver with Fort George much has been said in the public press during recent weeks, and there has been marked activity among the various boards of trade, chambers of commerce and similar organizations which have energetically taken up this project. But when I take the House into my confidence and tell the House that the consideration of the best means to adopt to secure the building of this line has been the work of the Government during months and months past, it must not be taken as the slightest reflection upon the activity of these various organizations, but, rather, the Government recognizes these organizations as fittingly representative of the business interests of the country and of the optimistic feeling which is enjoyed throughout the length and breadth of British Columbia.

NEARLY 5,000 MILES OF RAILWAY

In the first place, I should like to direct the attention of the House to the very striking evidence of the part played by late railway construction in the development of the Province. In 1904 there were, in British Columbia, but 1,650 miles of standard roads. In 1912 the mileage, constructed or assured, and largely through the development of the railway policy of this Government, is not less than 2,435 miles—built or under contract. (Applause.) If we add to this the 845 miles in addition which are provided for by the policy of the Government embraced and expressed in these bills, we have the result of constructed and assured railways in British Columbia of about five thousand miles of standard road, as against but 1,650 a few years ago. Included in this approximate total I count this Vancouver and Fort George line with an estimated length of 450 miles.

There have been several large organizations interesting themselves in the project involved in linking up Vancouver and Fort George by a line of railway, to give access also to the Peace River country; and while the Government has, after mature consideration, completed this agreement with Messrs. Foley, Welch & Stewart, this by no means indicates that the Government undertakes to say or desires to suggest that any of the other persons or corporations who have been applying for the right to take this work in hand have been in any way unequal to the task. The contract with Messrs. Foley, Welch & Stewart has been made in the general public interest, and with recognition as well of the fact of what is being done by the Grand Trunk Pacific.

PEACE RIVER AN INDEPENDENT RAILWAY

Now, Mr. Speaker, I should like, in the first place, to make one observation in connection with this proposal, and that is that this Pacific Great Eastern Railway Company, which this bill will bring into existence, is an entirely independent and individual railway company under the control of this Government, a company absolutely independent and in no respect whatever allied with or dependent upon either the Grand Trunk Pacific, the Canadian Pacific, or any other road. In casually looking over the schedules set out in this bill, one might possibly come to the conclusion that this company would be to a certain degree or in some way under the power of the Grand Trunk Pacific Company, but careful perusal of the bill will dispel this misapprehension and convince the House of the fact that this new line, which may become in process of time part and portion of still another Canadian transcontinental system—as I sincerely hope it may—is in reality independent absolutely, under the control of this Provincial Government.

More than that, while in this bill we are providing for connection between Vancouver and Fort George via Howe Sound and up the Fraser Valley, it will be seen that provision has also been made for adequate connections to serve the coast cities and New Westminster. Provision has also been made in this connection for the maintenance of a proper ferry service between Vancouver Island and the Mainland—a ferry service which must be in every respect the best that can be provided, and which must measure up to the requirements of the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council. So that, while this new road will necessarily be of first and very special service to the City of Vancouver, at the same time all the communities and all the districts of the Province will also be afforded every reasonable opportunity to share in the benefits that will be made possible through

the opening up of the regions that this line will traverse, and Victoria and New Westminster, as well as the outlying districts, will share in the many profits and blessings produced by the construction of this new line.

TIMBER AND MINERAL WEALTH

With respect to the country to be opened up and served by this road, it will not be necessary for me here or now to indulge in any general description. I need scarcely tell this House of the wonderful timber wealth of the Howe Sound district, or of the latent mineral wealth lying in that zone today, awaiting exploitation that has hitherto been impossible for the lack of transport facilities. Through my identification with the Department of Mines, I have, perhaps, especial facilities for knowing that the mineral prospects of this section, when once transportation difficulties have been removed, are of vast importance, and there is every reason to believe, as well as to hope, that this section will some day prove one of our best lode mining districts. With respect to the Pitt River Meadows, they are already receiving considerable deserved attention as a valuable agricultural region. Farming operations have been under way there during years past, attended with such a measure of success as to plainly show that here again, with the provision of additional facilities of transport, the people of British Columbia will be enabled to develop farming land, which give every promise of being a splendid and valuable addition to our agricultural areas, and provide satisfactorily for large augmentation of our population. Then, as we move along, there is the Lillooet district, and honourable gentlemen here must know something of what great potentialities are to be found there.

LILLOOET DISTRICT

There is no doubt whatever of the wonderful productiveness of the soil of the Lillooet section, and as to the fruits that are grown there, it is the opinion of the best experts and the most experienced judges that it is of the finest quality and the most excellent flavour. I have visited this district in the course of my travels through the interior of our Province, and can speak from personal knowledge of the excellent crops of the Lillooet of apples and the general classes of fruits which one would look for as likely to thrive in this particular zone, which is part and parcel of the world-famous dry belt of British Columbia. When construction of this new line is accomplished, the people of the Lillooet will be able to make their shipments to markets that are eagerly awaiting such supplies of apples and plums and peaches and such other fruits, and we on the coast will be able to get these fruits from the Lillooet, as we should have

long ago had the facilities of transport been available. We will then be able to get the fruits grown in the Okanagan on the island as well as on the mainland.

TRANSPORTATION FOR MINERALS

Then, as to the mineral country, Lillooet has for many years enjoyed a reputation of some considerable importance. Some years ago you all recollect that there was a tremendous excitement in Lillooet because of the discovery of some lode mines where there promised to be an abundance of very rich ore of free-milling quality. On this excitement there followed many disappointments and considerable loss, with the result that Lillooet, like many another mining camp in its early history, has had to suffer from the effects of an injured reputation; but I would be the last man in British Columbia to say that Lillooet as a mining section is done or that there is nothing in sight there for the miners of the future. On the contrary, I am pleased to be able to tell the House that from reports which we have received from Government engineers and others, the sections of the Lillooet district now being prospected or in course of development give promise of excellent results in the near future. Heretofore, because of the indifferent transportation, it has been almost impossible to provide mining machinery at a cost which was not prohibitive, but once this mining machinery is able to be brought into the country at a moderate cost, we will soon see there the rapid development of many a promising property. I am satisfied that the early completion of the Vancouver and Howe Sound road will be coincident with the flowering up of a new life in that section of the Province, and that it will presently spring into prominence as worthy of a high place in the mineral zone of British Columbia.

HARVEST OF GOLD

The history of mining in British Columbia unquestionably will bear out the statement that there has been a remarkable harvest of gold from the streams of the Lillooet country through placer mining. The bars which extend along the Fraser Valley have been the source of rich fortunes to many an adventurous prospector, and the time is approaching when the application of up-to-date methods to the problem of lifting this mineral wealth from the beds of the Fraser and its tributary streams will once more be possible, and this time on a very large scale. We know from what has been done in the past that gold exists in these river beds probably to a much greater extent than it was found in Southern California, where dredging methods have been carried out so successfully, and I am impelled to the belief that with the construction of this railroad there will be large and profitable investments in the gold dredging

industry. You will see the Fraser throughout his section lined with gold dredges capable of lifting from the river bed millions upon millions of gold. I do not wish to be at all extravagant in my references in this respect. I am mindful of the fact that the responsible office I hold as Minister of Mines must make me more than careful in anything I may say in regard to the mining industry, but I wish to say that I speak advisedly because of my own intimacy with the district and from reports which I have had sent to me by independent explorers and miners, and from all these sources I am satisfied that there is a wonderful future assured for Lillooet both as a placer gold dredging proposition and as a lode mining centre.

OPENING UP CARIBOO

Then, as we come up the Fraser, we approach the Cariboo district. This is a district with which many of the honourable gentlemen here have the privilege of a considerable acquaintance, and many of the members are well aware of the riches of the Fraser as you approach the Quesnel country and the Fort George section. There have been farms successfully operated and long since flourishing along the benchlands of the Upper Fraser River. There are many estimable pioneers as well as old residents along the banks of this mighty stream who went there in the early 'fifties or 'sixties, and first made their records for homesteads and pre-emptions, and, despite the disadvantages which they encountered, and especially the very great difficulties with regard to transportation, they have been to a very wonderful extent successful, and many of them have accumulated splendid competencies through their farming and stock-raising operations. Their investments, which have been so successful under the conditions which they were compelled to meet, will give us some idea of what is in store for settlers who will pour into that wonderful land in the near future. I was very much struck in travelling through that country from the district of Lillooet right through the country from Soda Creek below to Fort George and above—I was very much impressed with the wonderful extent of the excellent farm land that is to be found on either side of the main river. This land, as anyone may see who takes a trip through that country, is almost limitless in quantity and is of excellent quality.

MAGNIFICENT HERITAGE

As you go up from Quesnel no one can hesitate in the conclusion to which he will come as to what lies before that country when there is more development, because, from the appearance of the farms that have been there for forty or fifty years and from the abundance of the crops which have been raised, we can see that ex-

perimentation has been carried to such an extent as to disclose the splendid fact to the people of British Columbia that we have a magnificent heritage for an agricultural community in this great north land. Then, when you leave Quesnel and Soda Creek and go on to Fort George, you see the wonderful riches of the country along the Fraser, whose navigation presents absolutely no difficulties to the vessels that have for years now been operating under the management of the British Columbia Express and other companies. Even at this early stage of the growth and development being produced and destined to be produced by the Grand Trunk Pacific, you find in this district settlement after settlement where the pre-emptor has gone in and where there is every reason to believe there will before long be a large and very wealthy population. Then, as you approach Fort George you find a wonderful section of country at the junction of the Necho River with the Fraser, at or near Fort George. There the scene is most pleasing to the eye.

MARVELLOUS COUNTRY

On my trip to Fort George some months ago I had the opportunity of visiting one of the townsites, and, by the way, there are several there, and likely to remain; but I, as I say, with some of my friends, had an opportunity to visit one of them, where we secured an excellent view of the Upper Fraser and the long reach of the Necho River. It is a sight which must impress all who behold it, and which, I am sure, will long linger in the memory, not only of myself, but of those who were with me on that occasion. Here is a marvellous country and one which, with just a little more development of transportation, may, even independent of its agricultural resources, make the lower section of British Columbia look to her laurels. It would be unfair at this early stage of her development to ask too much of the Necho and the northern country, but there has been already a good deal of settlement. The experimental work has been done, and we are fully entitled to say that it is destined to take rank side by side with the very best sections of the Province in agricultural and horticultural productivity. Suffice it to say for the present that the settlers who have already gone in there are well satisfied. They are raising crops abundant in quantity and of the best quality. While their markets are yet few and far between, they are able to make good profits. The prospects of the settlers in this district, therefore, are in the highest degree encouraging.

IN PEACE RIVER COUNTRY

Now, as we pass away from Fort George, which for the present is the terminal of this road, we come presently to the Peace River

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country, in which we look for some remarkable developments before long. Stories are brought from there by exploring parties of the wonderful land and the promising coal fields and the immense timber areas of this part of the Province of British Columbia. We can scarcely look through a single local paper of these times without finding some account here of what may be expected when the Peace River country is opened up. All manner of forecasts are made as to the great wheat crops the Peace River country will be able to answer for. So many things are said about the coal fields as to make one feel that when transportation facilities are provided the coal output may equal, if it does not surpass, in value that of the wheat. Then, too, we are told of the vast areas of timber of excellent quality, not perhaps so large or so dense as you find in the lower section of the country, but nevertheless, considering the latitude in which it is located, is a good marketable kind of timber that will be profitable because it will be found suitable for that section of the country which lies east of the mountains.

GOVERNMENT'S INTENTION

The Government has not gone so far in its present proposals as to provide for the extension of the railway system from Fort George into the Peace River country, but we would have you to take the bill that we submit today as an earnest of the intention of the Government to press on with the work of providing transportation for the northern part of the country, and all our efforts on this behalf will be based in the future, as in the past, on the closest inquiry and investigation. By the time this road is at or near Fort George we expect to be in a position to determine to what length and along what route there shall be a continuance of transportation from Fort George toward the northern hinterland. This is a large subject, but one which, in all fairness, I am bound to anticipate, in view of the extensive transportation proposals the Government has presented to the country. And I would ask the House to believe that just so soon as time and conditions warrant, it is proposed to leave nothing undone to connect the Peace River district of the north with the older settled districts to the south, so that there may be one belt line running down to the 49th parallel, and so that we may preserve this great country and the interests it may cover for our own people and our own interests. (Applause.)

FIRST MORTGAGE ON LINE

I am not this afternoon making any attempt at all to go into the details of this contract. You, sir, are familiar, and the House is familiar, with these various proposals. They are word for word

what has already been explained to you in connection with the Canadian Northern Pacific contract. We are asking this firm to whose undertaking our Government guarantee is being given that they in return shall give to the Province of British Columbia precisely the same securities as we received from the Canadian Northern Pacific Company. British Columbia secures a first mortgage on the line. The Government guarantee is \$35,000 per mile, and the securities will draw four per cent. interest. The company is to build a standard gauge line, and to operate it according to the requirements and to the satisfaction of the Provincial Administration, and the Province of British Columbia is to retain control of the transportation rates. (Applause.) So that we may have this assurance—while we propose to give a general subvention in order to encourage the consideration and completion of this road, when it is built and in operation, the rates will not be prohibitive, but will be such as the people of the country will be able to enjoy with some degree of profit. (Applause.) We know perfectly well because of the dissatisfaction that has been expressed because of the attitude of the present transcontinental line, the Canadian Pacific Railway, on freight and passenger tariffs, that there is a feeling throughout British Columbia, especially in those sections through which this railway runs, that there is one way by which we may have security that the traffic arrangements of these lines will be fair and reasonable, and that is by retaining within the local Administration the power and authority to say whether the tariffs are reasonable or not. (Applause.) It is not likely that we would ask any company to adopt a tariff that would not permit at least of paying the costs of operation and decent profits, but, while we want the company to operate efficiently and properly, we do not want it to be in any respect an imposition on the general public. We want to give a full measure of fairplay and nothing more. We think that the Government of British Columbia, no matter of whom it may be composed, can be trusted to see that nothing is done to the company that is unjust or that will impair its usefulness as a transportation agency.

WHITE LABOUR ONLY

The road is to be built by white labour alone, and there is to be a fair wage clause in the contract. And on this point may I be allowed to refer a moment to questions that have been asked us with respect to labour on the Canadian Northern Pacific, both as to its Mainland and Vancouver Island lines. There are, I believe, about 6,000 men employed in the construction of these lines, and we are attempting as far as we can to keep a general supervision over them, and it is a matter of some congratulation that, despite this large

number of employees, complaints have been so few and far between. With so large a number employed, here and there difficulties must arise and will have to be met, but I can say that all around the Canadian Northern Pacific has lived up to its bargain to employ white labour and white labour alone, and to observe the fair wage clause. I congratulate my friend from Newcastle, who, with his usual energy in these matters, has looked around to see that there is no unfairness, in that he called my attention to one case on Vancouver Island where the wage is below the fair-wage schedule. We propose to look into this and to see that the white labour of the country gets the protection to be found within the four corners of these bills. While in the bill there is no specific mention of Orientals, at the same time we have in our possession a contract with the company which is enforceable, and which gives us this assurance, the same as in the other schedules, so that while there is no direct mention of Orientals, the Government has made its agreement that they shall employ no yellow men. The reason for this is apparent. In the past a great deal of delicacy has been expressed whenever there has been mention of Orientals, and there has been disallowance, so, to guard against the slightest danger in this respect and to keep ourselves as far as possible from the doctrines that have obtained in the Department of Justice of late, in these contracts, since we made our first contract with the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Company, we have been careful not to enclose this Oriental schedule in our bargain, but we have provided for it by private agreements in which the country can rest secure and satisfied.

EXISTING CHARTER

There is an item I must mention before moving the second reading of this bill. It occurs in connection with nine or ten miles of standard gauge railway built from Howe Sound towards the Pemberton Valley by the Howe Sound and Pemberton Meadows Railway Company, of which Mr. J. C. Keith, an estimable citizen of British Columbia, is president. From my information, Mr. Keith undertook the construction of this line from the town of Newport, at the head of Howe Sound, with a view to extending it to the Pemberton Valley and further on to Fort George. The Pacific and Great Eastern Railway, as I have already described, will traverse the same section of country as is already traversed by this nine miles of road. I would like to inform the Legislature this afternoon that in the working out of the details in connection with the construction of this line, it is expected that the new company will be enabled on fair and reasonable terms, to take over the trackage of the Howe Sound and Pemberton Valley road, so that the investment for which it stands

will find fair and ample protection. If the Government can assist a settlement of this sort, I assure you we shall spare no effort in this direction. Mr. Keith is an old resident of this country, and has shown great faith in this Province, and is one for whom I have great respect, and to me it would be very satisfactory if these interests could be fused and the investments of Mr. Keith should not be injuriously affected.

PEOPLE TO DECIDE

And now I have tried to define in these few words to the House and to the country the principles underlying the construction of the Vancouver and Fort George Railway, with which the Provincial Government has been associated. The Government attempts this undertaking with every assurance that it will meet with the approbation of the people of British Columbia, and with the endorsement of our brother Canadians to the east of the Rocky Mountains and by the shores of the Atlantic Ocean. Developments of this kind are being watched with great interest throughout the Dominion, and what British Columbia is doing is of as much concern in the good old City of Halifax as in the City of Edmonton.

The associations which are growing up and which appear to be bringing nearer and nearer this Western Province to the far East of Canada are indeed striking evidence of the fact that we are quickly coming out of the obscurity that seems to have hidden us during all these years and take the place and rank among the provinces of Canada that the wonderful resources of the Province entitles us to claim.

Let me close by saying that for my part, as I must take the principal responsibility for these proposals as leader of the Government and the party in this House, I do so without the slightest hesitancy. The Government is, under ordinary conditions, entitled to have another session before going to the country. Four years, according to law, must expire before it is required that we go down to the country for endorsement and support. I am not saying this afternoon that there is a proposal on foot that in the near future there should be another election, but I am saying that if we think these proposals are of so great weight and importance as to justify an appeal to the people, we will appeal to that great jury and look to them for the endorsement which hard and honest work and efficient administration rightly entitles us to.

C. N. P. CONSTRUCTION

On the bill to make provision for the extension of the lines of the Canadian Northern Pacific the Premier said:

This bill will, I am sure, prove of more than passing interest to the members of this House, especially because this present Legislature is responsible for the part and place the Canadian Northern Pacific has taken and is taking in the present development of British Columbia. It is competent for the Government under the old Canadian Northern Pacific bill by order-in-council to provide necessary authority to the company for the extension of its lines, and under that power the Government, some time since, provided the corporation with the right to advance its line on the Island of Vancouver 150 miles north and east, and from the City of Kamloops to Kelowna by way of Armstrong and Vernon, a distance of 125 miles, and from Vernon to Lumby, a distance of something like twenty miles, making a total of 150 miles on the Island and approximately 145 miles on the Mainland.

I am reminded when I direct my attention to the proposals of this company that there have been of late requests made to the Government to solicit the interest of the Canadian Northern in other parts of the Province, notably in the Nicola, Revelstoke, Golden and southeast Kootenay districts, and Quatsino and Hardy Bay as well. While the provision made in this bill does not extend to all of these, I think that the work of the Canadian Northern as a great pioneering road and an energetic one in the other provinces, will stand as a great assurance to this Province that presently, when the time is ripe and plans will provide, the Government is prepared to move that they shall extend their lines into these communities.

NICOLA COUNTRY

Take the Nicola country, where of recent date wonderful coal mining has been under way, where there is a large expanse of productive country, where the climate is most congenial, and where I enjoyed very much, and on which I was able to see all I could in the time of that wonderful country. We did not proceed along the Canoe River, but from Government reports we know enough to believe that with railway connection there is a large territory there that can be made profitable. One of the reports speaks favourably of the future of the Canoe River Valley for fruit raising. If, by the extension of the Canadian Northern, they can come down the Canoe River and from Big Bend to Revelstoke, the community represented by the Minister of Public Works, instead of being a thriving city of some eight or ten thousand people, will be able to claim a population of hundreds of thousands, as enthusiastic townsmen of that gentlemen would have you believe is its future.

DOWN INTO KOOTENAY

Then, again, up the Columbia and down into Kootenay is a chance for railway development. Away back in the early 'eighties, when a contractor on the C. P. R., Sir William Mackenzie saw the value that lay in the future of the timber berths in that valley. He told me not long since that he purchased large tracts at that time, and he holds these still; that if he had faith then in the future of the country he has ten times more today.

As to Southeast Kootenay, the C. N. R. is in possession at the present time of a franchise authorizing them to go through Kootenay Pass. They have made explorations, and are continuing to find a way into Southeast Kootenay, where their lines may be extended and favourably operated.

To compare the record of the Canadian Northern with the record of the Canadian Pacific and its accomplishments, to be fair to the Canadian Northern you must say that at any rate in point of energy and in point of courage the Canadian Northern has made a record that is far beyond anything the railroad history of Canada has disclosed to date. If in the course of its development, with its huge assets standing so well in the opinion of the world, the Canadian Pacific had ever developed the energy, the courage and the foresight that is displayed by the Canadian Northern you should have seen today a much larger mileage under the aegis of that corporation than we have today in British Columbia. Not that I wish to reflect on that corporation or on that great railway man at the head of it, Sir Thomas Shaughnessy, because, as a Canadian, I want to say that under him it is a credit and a source of pride to the Canadian people and the British race, but, speaking from the viewpoint of a British Columbian, I say that as compared with the Canadian Northern there has never been, at least to date, the same courageous and the same energetic activity as Sir William Mackenzie and Sir Donald Mann both have shown in connection with the Canadian Northern.

IN THE OKANAGAN

Now we come to the consideration of what this road will do for the beautiful Okanagan, and I will not at this time go over the many and eloquent references that I have heard in regard to it within these walls of Parliament. That the Okanagan is good we know. From the remarkable wealth of the district we may estimate the great future that is now before it. Even with the one line of transportation, the Shuswap and Okanagan, we have witnessed in the last fifteen or sixteen years developments that constitute a record, and when we consider that fact what may we not expect, what may we not have the right to claim, as coming to this part of British

Columbia presently when the Canadian Northern Pacific system is extended in that direction? Consider how much it will mean to Vernon, Armstrong, the Upper Okanagan Valley, Kelowna, Summerland and all of these different places in the immediate vicinity. It is impossible to prophesy what the net result will be; suffice it to say that the same benefits will ensue to these sections of the Province that always come to sections of territory where railway competition offers and is supplied.

MULTIPLIED PROSPERITY

If there has been prosperity in these places in the days gone by, I should like to undertake to say this afternoon that prosperity will be greatly multiplied in the near future, when the Canadian Northern Pacific is in operation and in touch with the entire community. You must mark that the road leading into the Okanagan leaves the main line at Kamloops. This is an interesting point, because it seems to me that anything associated with good old Kamloops is always of more than passing interest. Since the inception of business it has always been the intention of the Canadian Northern Railway to establish at Kamloops very extensive railway shops. The management of the line realizes that there is a tremendous business to be looked for both in the coast section between tidewater and Kamloops and the interior section between Kamloops and the eastern boundary of the Province. In order to work toward this end, which means the effective maintenance of the road, plans have been under way to provide for large machine shops and all the other impedimenta, so to speak, that goes to make up the modern railway centre. Kamloops is to have the benefit of these. And, in addition to that, has to be added the construction and operation of branch lines. For my own part, I am glad to be in a position to say that this must mean a great deal to Kamloops, and must serve as another assurance to the people, both at home and abroad, of the splendid future that lies before the inland capital.

ON VANCOUVER ISLAND

Passing over to Vancouver Island, it is interesting to note that the one hundred and fifty mile section will take the Canadian Northern system as far as Strathcona Park and beyond, and to all the wonderful and beautiful discoveries—I use the terms in a general sense—of that great district. But of all the striking things that have occurred in the Province during the past few years I think that the awakening that has come to Vancouver Island is easily the most striking. Even twelve months ago, when the Government was dealing with the Songhees reserve question, and when there was some

mention of what amount of ground would be required for terminal facilities, the subject was disposed of by men with large experience in transportation with the statement that perhaps twenty to thirty acres would suffice. Today, under the advice of the Council and one of the most experienced of expert terminal engineers, Mr. Holman, of the Harriman lines, it is stated that more than half the reserve will be required for terminals; and I am since advised that in view of the great construction in prospect the entire reserve will have to be given up for the same purpose. It is a splendid commentary on the development of the Island that such a condition of affairs should obtain—that what was deemed adequate for the purpose a few months ago must be multiplied ten times over. I am of the opinion, though I must not stop to express myself more fully on the point, that the developments that will take place here with the Island railway extensions and the improvement in our harbour, will presently assume such proportions as to tax the entire community and the near surrounding territory for a sufficiency of room to take care of the additions that will be necessary.

NEW AND BETTER THINGS

While I remark that this is a good thing for the Capital City, at the same time it is an excellent thing for the entire population of the country. Victoria has had the handicap of water travel to the mainland, and she has suffered more or less from the fact that her influences with the C. P. R. were never of the same standing as those exercised by the Terminal City of Vancouver. I am not here speaking in any critical vein at all, but rather in the attempt simply to mark something that is of record. We are, however, under the promise of new and better things and more prosperous times. These extensions on the Island will serve in a very marked way to bring about new conditions; and, with the development of our timber and mineral wealth, and with the discovery of more agricultural land on the island and the disclosure to the world of these advantages, together with the wonderful climate and the still more wonderful scenery which the island is in a position to boast of. I think I may safely say that there will be such a revolution and settlement as has never been preceded, even within the knowledge of those who are familiar with the country.

EVERY CONFIDENCE

Speaking personally, I have every confidence in the island and in the mainland as well. If I did not have that confidence I would not this afternoon, with all solemnity and deliberation, submit to the people of the country the great railway proposals now before the

House. While I have that confidence and enjoy that assurance, I do not think that I would be right in my conduct if I allowed a day or an hour to go by without taking the first opportunity to give to the people of British Columbia all the blessings that ought to flow from the opening up and development of such marvellous territory as we know to be contained within the four corners of the Province. If it has so happened, as I indicated in my address, that in the wisdom of the Government there may be an appeal to the country, there is no question of this, that the Government is prepared to go to the people of the country and ask their verdict. And if that verdict were to prove unfavourable, I would have you believe, sir, that there are no men more prepared to accept the judgment of the people on this question than those gentlemen who compose the Government of the country, or the party which stands so well and so strong behind them. But we have had some knowledge of our people in days gone by. We know and rightly claim to know the timber of which they are made. We understand the energy and aggressiveness of the Canadian who lives in British Columbia. We can feel his buoyancy and enjoy his enthusiasm. While we want to be with him and by him, at the same time, as a Government, we feel that it is our duty to try and see a little in advance. So it is with that determination to be a little in advance that we are at this present time making provision for the opening up of the country.

STRATHCONA PARK

Now we come to Strathcona Park. In this section of line that is now under way—and here I am satisfied that the House will agree with me—may be found, just so soon as the proper plan is matured and the line open, some of the most wonderful scenery in the world, a playground of 200,000 acres, and more than that, something that in the days and years and centuries to come, will furnish a great amount of enjoyment and delight to generations and generations of our people, as well too, as of our neighbours. Strathcona Park is easy of access from Vancouver. Presently it will be easy of access from Victoria also. But I would emphasize the fact that we do not propose that this park shall be the especial preserve of British Columbians. We would invite our American cousins to take advantage of this wonderful property. It will be as open to them and to the whole world as it will be to British Columbians or Canadians. It will be a playground for the people of the world, open to all, where comfort and enjoyment may be had with beauty of scenery and salubrity of climate.

I am told that the scenery of the park is unrivalled. I have not had the opportunity to investigate it in person but my colleague, the

Minister of Finance and Agriculture, made a very successful trip through the length and breadth of the park, and judging from the pictures which he brought back, must be one of the most delightful spots in the entire world. I was especially delighted with those of the series portraying him going over the mountain tops and dipping into the valleys with an agility that would have done credit to a boy of sixteen. When it had that effect upon my colleague, the Minister of Finance and Agriculture, I think I can rightly claim that it will serve as a wonderful playground for the people of this Province in which to recuperate and forget the worries of life, at least for a time.

My colleague the Minister of Public Works will be able to announce in a day or two what arrangements he has under way, which he will ask this House to endorse, with regard to the development of Strathcona Park. I think that you will agree that his plans have been very well designed and I am quite satisfied that they will meet with your fullest approval. Strathcona Park I am firmly convinced will in the course of the next few years become to the people of the Pacific coastline what the National Park at Banff is today and what Jasper Park presently will be to the people of the great Interior.

IMMEDIATE CONSTRUCTION

Before concluding my remarks upon this bill, I may say that the proposals involved are upon exactly the same lines as those contained in the agreement entered into with the Canadian Northern Pacific two years ago. Our present contract in this bill for further Canadian Northern extensions in British Columbia is in the same terms as the agreement of two years ago and the same conditions are involved. And, Mr. Speaker, I have every reason to believe that construction operations which will shortly be undertaken under authority of this measure will be energetically prosecuted with the same splendid progressiveness that is witnessed today in connection with the building of the Canadian Northern Pacific under the legislation accomplished by this House two years ago.

"I have in my hand," Hon. Mr. McBride continued, "a telegram from Mr. Hanna, the Vice-President of the Canadian Northern, which I received only this afternoon. I wanted to find out from him the latest returns with regard to the mileage that the Canadian Northern is at present operating and also the additional mileage under contract, and I wired Mr. Hanna for information. Here is his reply:

"Hon. Richard McBride,
"Victoria:

"Toronto, Feb. 20.

"Referring to your telegram: We are operating altogether in Canada sixty-three hundred and twenty miles. Under construction

are twenty-two hundred and forty miles, including six hundred miles in British Columbia. I regret that I cannot give you any definite idea of our projected mileage but it is over one thousand miles.

"(Signed) D. B. HANNA."

MATTER OF CONGRATULATION

Now, sir, when we are able to tell Parliament this afternoon that these proposals to which I have just referred and which are embodied in this bill bring us still closer in touch with a national transcontinental line that is actually operating or is building approximately ten thousand miles of standard gauge road, it should be a matter of congratulation to the entire country. Construction of the new roads which we are now providing for will assure that all of our lands—whether agricultural or timbered or mineralized—and all our towns existent or which will spring up in this country will be brought into close touch with the country east of the mountains and with markets assuring an excellent margin of profit for all time to come.

Much has been said with regard to the attitude of this Government toward the Canadian Northern company, and strange to say very much of this criticism is expressed in the columns of a local newspaper which seems particularly active in its desire to make damning references to the Canadian Northern and the men who are the head of this road. Curiously, too, the gentleman who is understood to control the policy of this newspaper was until only recently a member of the government of Sir Wilfrid Laurier—a member of that government at the time that the bargain was consummated with the Canadian Northern for construction from Port Arthur eastward involving assistance by the Federal authority to the extent of thirty-seven million dollars. How comes it that a gentleman who was a party to this bargain can now find it possible to speak of the company interested as dishonest and unworthy. It would perhaps be interesting to analyze the actuating motives of the Victoria Times' remarks on this subject, and at some future date it may be necessary to do so.

CAPTAINS OF INDUSTRY

I am satisfied that the action of the Canadian Government in the transaction referred to was based upon appreciation of the fact that these men are good men and true—wholesome and capable men and true captains of industry who are well worthy to play the parts they are playing in the provision of necessary transportation facilities for British Columbia. I shall not refer to what is being done by the Canadian Northern in the way of adding to the steamship services of the Pacific seacoast, nor to the new order of things in

this Province which the operations of this company have in a large measure assisted to bring about, but I would say that the most prejudiced critic will agree that the Canadian Northern has been a factor of tremendous benefit—a Godsend to British Columbia and a blessing to the people of Canada. (Applause). Mr. Speaker, I submit this bill to the House firmly believing that Parliament will endorse its provisions, and once more with the confident assurance that it will meet as well with the approbation of the entire community of British Columbia. (Applause).

KETTLE RIVER VALLEY PROPOSALS

In moving the second reading of the bill respecting the Kettle River Valley Company's extensions, the Premier said:

In moving this second reading, Mr. Speaker, I promise to be very brief in my remarks. The measure, as all must know, provides for a Provincial Government bonus of \$10,000 per mile for fifty miles, from Hope on the Fraser River, to Coldwater Junction, the summit of the Coast Range. This will be the means of bringing to the Coast the Kettle River Valley railway which is now in operation between the Boundary and the Nicola Valley. All will have in memory the agitation that has been taking place in British Columbia during so many years for a Coast to Kootenay road. There have been many discussions of this question in this Parliament, and I will recall when a member of the Dunsmuir Government the very heated discussion that arose on the construction of this Coast to Kootenay line, the Government being at one time almost threatened with disruption over this issue.

It is not necessary for me at this juncture to say anything as to the manifold advantages of the Boundary, the Similkameen and the Nicola districts. The gentlemen who represent these districts in this Parliament are very well qualified to perform any duty which may devolve in this respect. All in this House are familiar with the ability and the enthusiasm displayed by the member for the Boundary country in emphasizing at every opportunity the conspicuous merits and advantages of his particular district. And who is there here who has not appreciated the bursting eloquence of the member for the Similkameen when the glories of that district are his theme. ((Applause and cries of hear, hear). The wonderful endowment in varied natural advantages which the Similkameen possesses have been frequently brought by him to the attention of this House.

PASSES THROUGH SUMMERLAND

The Kettle River Valley line construction which we were able to assist two years ago has now approximately a mileage of 275 miles. There was a question raised when this matter was last

brought before this House as to its connection with the town of Summerland and the coming important centre of Princeton, and I have today been warned by my friend, the member of the Similkameen, to say to this House that we are assured in connection with the Kettle River Valley that this line will be built not, as it is so often expressed, to a point at or near Princeton, but that it will be built in and through Princeton, so that that part of my friend's constituency is certain to enjoy the very large advantages which are certain to accrue through this contact with the Kettle River Valley road. I may also say that this line will pass through the town of Summerland.

As to the connection between the Coldwater Junction and the Coast, some will be likely to ask why was not this provided for when we were making the contract with the Kettle River Valley people two years back? This I can explain very readily. There have been for the construction of this piece of road two especially active competitors, the Victoria, Vancouver & Eastern railway, which is a subsidiary company of the Great Northern, an American road, and the Kettle River Valley, a Canadian line enjoying a subvention from the Dominion government. Year after year the Victoria, Vancouver & Eastern people have periodically made the announcement that a contract was just about to be let and that under it the Victoria, Vancouver & Eastern would be built and the Kootenay brought into communication with the Coast cities. I have, sir, been waiting for nine years now to see the fulfilment of these promises, but up to the present day without result. There has been no contract let, and no construction undertaken, but spring after spring and fall after fall we have been told that the engineers of the company were busily engaged seeking a new route or that something else had arisen to deter the company from making a beginning of that substantial progress that the country has so greatly desired.

CANNOT AFFORD TO WAIT

In these times, with the completion of the Panama Canal in sight, and the generally rapid development that is taking place through Western America, we cannot afford to prolong the policy of waiting. We must be in a position to take advantage of the opportunities which are presenting themselves. The conditions of the times do not brook longer delay, and we have come to the conclusion that it will be good business for us to invest a million dollars with the object of bringing the Kootenay district into close touch with Victoria, Vancouver and New Westminster, so as to secure and preserve and protect for the benefit of our own people the trade of the various sections of our own Province, and prevent the

diversion to the country south of the line of this business which belongs by right to British Columbia.

I have nothing whatever to say against the Great Northern Railway or Mr. James J. Hill, I recognize and admire Mr. Hill as a wonderful personality, a true captain of industry, and today the greatest empire-builder of the Western States. He is indeed a man of marvellous will and indomitable perseverance. But the time seems to be on the wane for the interests of British Columbia to receive just treatment at the hands of Mr. Hill, although he would have you believe that he is very much concerned with promoting the interests of this Province. We cannot overlook the fact that it was Mr. Hill who was responsible for the closing down of the Kaslo and Slocan Railway, an eventuality which, but for the action taken by the Government, would have spelled ruin to one of the best pioneer mining districts of British Columbia.

PROMISE UNREDEEMED

I regret to say, too, that we have yet to see that, despite the fact that we expected to see the terminals on False Creek undertaken, there is no evidence of any considerable effort being made in that regard, and I must express some disappointment with the action of the V. V. & E. in these matters. Meanwhile the Great Northern has built a branch line which will be capable of taking care of a great deal of the business assembled through the Similkameen. Self-preservation is the first law of nature and this Government is the trustee of the people so it is determined to preserve the Province for the people.

For this reason the Government felt that it was a proper thing to employ the money of the people for the immediate construction of this fifty miles of road. When this is built it will come under the Dominion railway law, by which the V. V. & E. will have the right to use its trackage on terms which the Dominion Railway Commission will settle. So that while we are bringing our own Canadian line into our own Canadian territories, provision has been made in all fairness which will permit the V. V. & E. to come over the mountains and do business with us in our Coast cities.

A NOTABLE EXAMPLE

What I am saying now is not said in any unfriendly spirit to Mr. Hill or to the Great Northern and because I do not wish to speak in an unfriendly way I will not speak of the Victoria and Sidney road right here at home, but if a stranger were looking for first class transportation I would not like to say that a trip on the Victoria and Sidney railway would afford him an opportunity to enjoy it. We are patient and long suffering. We acknowledge the

investments that Mr. Hill has made in this country and we want to keep him as a friend while we may, but he must understand that we propose to undertake our business affairs in a way that is right and just to the interests of the people of this country, and as to the construction of the Coast-Kootenay line in our opinion it is now or never, and we will wait no longer for the connection that we should have with the Interior.

There is also to be a bridge built from Hope to Ruby Creek which will not only serve the railway but will be another highway bridge across the Fraser, built at a cost of \$200,000. This will help to build up our system of highways in that district and will enable the people to move around more freely.

I would now submit this measure to the House, and in closing I will only say that the manner in which this work is to be carried out is a matter of sincere congratulation not only to the House but to British Columbia as well. (Applause.)

E. & N. RAILWAY

The Premier then took up the bill to ratify the agreement with the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway.

I will explain, said he, the purport of this measure in three or four minutes. The Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway Company, the original corporation that secured the land from the Crown, is still operating the railway on the Island. This road has been acquired by the C. P. R. and it is the intention of the C. P. R. to make further extensions of the line on the Island. In order to provide funds for this purpose in the most economical way, the C. P. R. desires that certain changes be made. The C. P. R. will be able to finance the proposed extensions more successfully if they can secure the E. & N. under a lease than if they were compelled to go on the market and raise the money directly on the credit of the E. & N. They approached the Government very frankly and openly with a statement to that effect. They said that they wanted to borrow more money in order to extend the line. They said that if they leased the line there might be some question as to the exemption of the lands from taxation under the original grant. They said that if the Government considered they were asking for a privilege not provided for in the original legislation the C. P. R. was willing to give some compensation. As a result of these negotiations it has been agreed that the C. P. R. shall pay a cent and a half per acre per annum for the unsold E. & N. lands. This will amount to the sum of \$18,000 a year. We agreed that we would enable the E. & N. to lease to the C. P. R. its line now under operation but with this further condition attached that it must be extended to Comox, and an assurance has been given to us and a guarantee has been imposed that the C. P. R.

will give railway connection to Comox and other parts of the Island within the next three years. So that in addition to having secured the right to impose a tax of \$18,000 a year on the unsold lands we have the assurance that the line will run to Comox within three years. For my part I do not see that we need have very much concern as to the compliance of the C. P. R. and as to their building further extensions on the Island because we know that the C. P. R. is becoming energetic these days in British Columbia, and when they see the Canadian Northern Pacific marching towards the head of Vancouver Island I have no doubt we will also see the C. P. R. taking on extra strength and pressing towards the north end of the Island, but in the meantime the fact that we are now to have this extension to Comox is a matter of congratulation to that part of British Columbia. Mr. Speaker, I move the second reading of this bill. Mr. Brewster moved the adjournment of the debate.

SUBSIDY LANDS

In moving the second reading of Bill No. 25, respecting the repurchase of certain subsidy lands, the Premier said:

This bill, in addition to providing for the repurchase of certain railway subsidy lands, provides for the reconstruction of the Kaslo and Slocan Railway line, and for the return to British Columbia of some \$387,000 paid by the Province on account of the Shuswap and Okanagan line. Some two or three sessions ago, under an Act of Parliament, the Province took power to repurchase the subsidy lands that were given railways in British Columbia with the provision that any act of ours in that regard should be reported to the House. Since that time negotiations have been under way with the officials of the C. P. R., and it is only within the last few weeks that they have them re-opened, and that any results have been accomplished. When we first attempted to deal with the business the company wanted a very excessive price for the lands. To this we could not then agree, but after a great deal of treaty and of exchange of views we have finally consented to repurchase these lands at forty cents an acre. The Columbia and Western lands, which are partly owned by Mr. Heinze, are pretty well intact, and contain a great deal of very valuable timber and soil as well. Under the administration of the Lands Department there can be no doubt that we shall make some very excellent returns from our management of these lands.

In Southeast Kootenay, while some of the lands are sold, and the company is reserving half a million acres as tie reserves, there is no doubt we shall make excellent returns from our management of them. Our assessment figure on these lands is fifty cents an acre, and the price the Land Act fixes as a minimum for Crown lands is

\$2.50. In the final determination of this business we compromised on forty cents, and it is on this basis we propose, with the authority of the Legislature, to buy them back.

CARRY COAL RIGHTS

The British Columbia Southern grant, the House must not forget, carried coal rights, and these lands, under the law today, are worth \$20 an acre. As large sections of these lands are in the coal zone we may look forward to the sale of a large portion of them at \$20 an acre.

At once, though, the question arises, if things are so promising as I describe, why should the C. P. R. part with these lands? My answer is ready. Under the old reservation certain mineral rights were provided for, and these have led to such a complication of conditions as has made it almost prohibitive for the company to deal with the lands at all. Endless litigation is in sight, and the difficulties created by the entry of the prospector and the homeseeker have been such as to practically close large sections. As soon as the Government takes possession, we shall see that the homeseeker and the prospector are given every opportunity to have these in full enjoyment, and we hope by departmental management to bring out of chaos a new order, and to so end what seems to have been a deplorable order of things, and make them impossible in the days to come. Profitable results can be expected in consequence.

In order to get this bargain finally closed, the Government in addition to paying forty cents an acre, has permitted the company to get recognition for certain blocks, the surveys of which were not completed. The company filed affidavits that owing to certain difficulties it was impossible to complete the surveys, and as those affidavits are by responsible men the Government in fairness and decency has recognized them, and in this bill gives acknowledgment of that.

RETURN OF \$400,000

But in addition to the return of these lands to the Province, there are other considerations moving the Government in the matter. There has been obtained the return to the Provincial treasury of some \$400,000 paid out on account of the Shuswap & Okanagan guarantee, and furthermore protection favorable to the Province against any further responsibility in that regard. And then, too, in connection with the Kaslo & Slocan there is the undertaking of the C. P. R. to standardize the railway from Kaslo to Sandon, operate it continuously, and give it all the favors of C. P. R. service.

I want to congratulate my old friend and associate, the member for Kaslo (Mr. Mackay) on this splendid accomplishment. Kaslo

has for all of us an attraction all its own. I have heard my friend from Kaslo describe the principal town of that district as the Lucerne of British Columbia. Without any question as you see the beautiful little town nestling at the foot of the lake with such wonderful surroundings, that marvellous stretch of water in front, and with a background of picturesque mountain tops, and stretch on stretch of wonderful bench lands, surely here is the setting for a community easily to be entitled to the name, the Lucerne of British Columbia.

TO ENJOY NEW LIFE

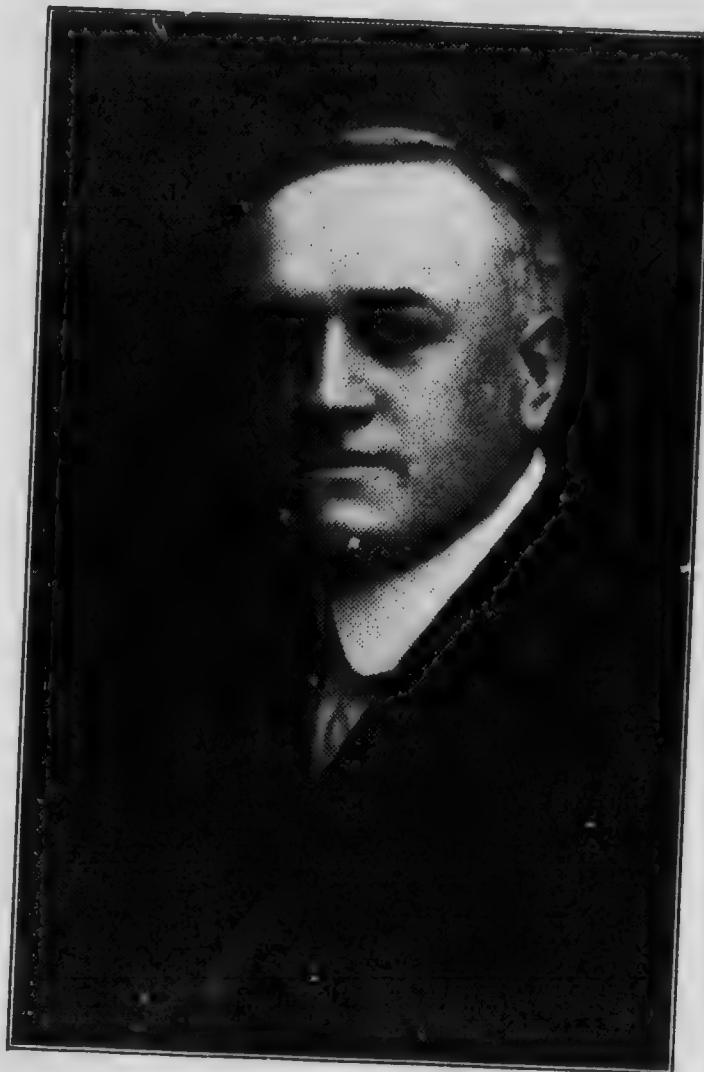
But there appears to have been some deterioration of its prospects, perhaps because of its indifferent transportation. We know there has been a decline and fall of the Kaslo and Slocan district, followed by the final abandonment of that railway system by the high officials of the Great Northern Railway company. But now Kaslo and the Slocan are to enjoy new life. There is to be a new order of things, and the bright and promising settlements to be met with from Silverton to Sandon will have encouragement to persevere and to wax and grow strong such as no condition heretofore has ever held out to them.

While I refer in these terms to the Slocan, I must not forget with what anxiety and concern our good old friend and associate from Slocan in this House has watched all these proceedings. It is with good fortune indeed that the constituencies of Slocan and Kaslo can lay claim to their representation in this House as we find it in our good friends and associates. But while I have spoken of Slocan and Kaslo and the enormous advantages they offer for settlement, I must not forget to tell the House, and I do so with great pleasure, that the mining statistics in my department show that the prospects for the mines of Slocan have never looked brighter than they do today. From our own official and other authoritative sources I am enabled to say that the present condition of the mines of the Slocan stamp them with a permanence that gives assurance for years to come of large and profitable operations. It would scarcely be in line with this discourse to deal with different individual properties. I do not propose to do so, but I can say that the old pioneer districts of Kaslo and Slocan, which in the early days of lode mining in this Province stood for so much, are coming back to their own, and promise to be far richer than even the most enthusiastic Kasloite ever hoped for.

In the bill itself, the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, as part and parcel of this bargain, is to spend \$400,000 in restoring the trackage on this railway, and the government is to provide a subsidy of \$100,000 towards the work. We found that unless this railway

were constructed, we must, in order to give some transportation facilities to the people in that district, construct a wagon road which would cost in the neighborhood of \$200,000. Honorable gentlemen all know that a railway is more efficient than a wagon road, and so we decided to give the Canadian Pacific Railway Company this subsidy of \$100,000, they to expend \$400,000 on the road so as to develop that country, and to give its mines a fair chance of development.

And so it is that with these few explanatory observations I submit this last message, strong in the faith that everything we have done will tend not only to the prosperity of British Columbia, but as well to the great prosperity of the entire Dominion of Canada." (Loud applause).



HON. W. J. BOWSER, K. C.,
ATTORNEY-GENERAL

THE HON. W. J. BOWSER'S REPLY TO MR. BREWSTER'S CRITICISMS ON THE RAILWAY POLICY

(Extract from "Colonist" of 23rd February, 1912)

Hon. Mr. Bowser said it was not his intention to take up much time. He always felt that because of the unfortunate position of the member for Alberni and the extra work thrown on his shoulders that his criticism was not so severe as it might be, or perhaps the policy of the Government was so nearly perfect that no inroad could be made on it. He did not feel that a party like the Liberals, once so powerful, but now gone to their reward, were of so much importance as to call for much attention. He thought, after the experience of the last election under the leadership of the member for Delta, the hon. gentleman from Alberni would hardly have had the temerity to refer to the Canadian Northern Pacific contract of two years ago. It looked as if that party were still holding a brief for the C. P. R. "He tells us," said the Attorney-General, "that he fears there is going to be a general election, so far as we are concerned there is no fear, but I have a personal fear that when I return to my seat on the right of the Speaker, the smiling countenance of the member for Alberni will not be sitting opposite me." (Laughter.)

He continued that the member for Alberni seemed to have great fear that the promoters of the Pacific Great Eastern were going to make a great profit from the sale of their stock because they were capitalized too high. Even in the cost under Dominion guarantee it had been found that \$35,000 a mile would not begin to build some railways, and owing to the nature of some parts of the route of this line to Peace River where were places where it would cost from \$100,000 to \$125,000 a mile. If the member for Alberni knew the condition of the first 35 miles from Vancouver, he would know that \$35,000 a mile would not begin to build a road around the rocky shores of Howe Sound, and the same condition would apply to the Anderson Lake country and other places where heavy rockwork would be required.

A CONTRAST

He would ask the House to contrast the position of the Government on this contract with that of the Government of Sir Wilfrid

Laurier on the Grand Trunk Pacific contract. If this Government agreed to issue forty-year bonds in this contract as against thirty-year bonds in the last, it was because they had found that the forty-year bonds sold better on the money markets of the world. Since the Government were the guarantors of the bonds they wanted the most out of them, and yet this was the great scandal that the Victoria Times had attempted to launch on the country in connection with this guarantee. In the bonds that Sir Wilfrid Laurier had brought down in connection with the Canadian Northern road east of Port Arthur, they had been made to run for fifty years. If that was the action of Sir Wilfrid Laurier and his great finance minister, in whose praise the member for Alberni made himself hoarse, surely a small finance minister such as the Hon. Mr. Bowser had been at the time, might well issue thirty-year bonds, and how could the member for Alberni find fault with this Government for issuing forty-year bonds. Not only that, but the Dominion Government had guaranteed the Canadian Northern bonds to the extent of \$36,000,000 yet because of this little guarantee of \$25,000,000, the member for Alberni would have people believe they had done wrong. Not only had Sir Wilfrid Laurier guaranteed the bonds of this company that gentleman opposite had so glibly condemned for aiding, but he had tied up his own railway, the Intercolonial in his traffic arrangements with them.

PAYMENT OF INTEREST

These bills also provided that three years after the completion of this line, or six years from the commencement of construction, the Government would pay interest on the line, but the railway company was to pay it back ten years after completion. This was the arrangement in the old bargain with the Canadian Northern also, and Sir Wilfrid Laurier had thought it so good that he had followed it in his bargain with the Canadian Northern, but had gone further and said: "I will pay the interest for the same length of time, but will not ask you to pay it back till the principal of the bonds is due." That was in fifty years from the date of the agreement. That was the difference between the two Governments, and yet the member for Alberni still claimed to be a supporter of Sir Wilfrid Laurier.

Another point he would like to mention was that Sir Wilfrid Laurier in his bargain with the Canadian Northern gave them his bond on the security of their roads. The Government of British Columbia had done the same thing previously, and yet in the last Provincial election the Liberals said it was no good, but two years later their leader did the very same thing. In this bargain with the Pacific Great Eastern, the Government had not only a first mortgage on the road, but they had also the personal bond of three multi-

millionaires, Messrs. Foley, Welch & Stewart, perhaps the greatest railway contractors on the American continent. These were the men who stood between the Government and the payment of the guarantees on this railway, which must do so much to build up the Coast cities of Vancouver and Victoria. Unfortunately the member for Alberni wanted to measure their corn by the Liberal bushel, but there was no reason to think that they would be as much astray in their estimates on the cost of this railway as the Liberals had been on the Grand Trunk Pacific. Sir Wilfrid Laurier had made the assertion that it would cost \$13,000,000, but the next day Mr. Fielding had changed it by saying it would cost \$54,000,000. Yet they had the latest statement of Hon. Mr. Cochrane that the cost of the road would run up to \$117,161,000, which with interest would bring the cost by January, 1912, up to \$236,000,000, and it was estimated that by January, 1924, it would have run up to \$258,000,000 or an average of \$143,000 per mile. No wonder these railways were hard to build under Liberal influence, and he might say with some graft, but as far as this Government was concerned, their railways would cost \$35,000 a mile and no more. There would be no open door so that it could be raised as in the case of the G.T.P.

RIGHT OF APPEAL

The member for Alberni had followed the example of his former leader in posing as a lawyer, and saying what would happen to the control of rates if it came up in the courts. The Government wanted rates so that their merchants could compete on even terms for the trade of the Peace River country or other territory with the merchants of Edmonton and cities east of the mountains. They had left the company the right to appeal to the Supreme Court, because they had no wish to be unfair, and as guarantors of the road they did not want them to operate at a loss. At the same time they had had it declared that this was not a railway for the general benefit of Canada because they did not want other transcontinental lines to go before the railway commission and declare that their rates were unfair. A few weeks ago in the Montreal Street Railway case the Privy Council had decided that they had the right independent of any railway commission to control the rates absolutely in their own province, so in this matter they were quite safe.

FERRY WILL FOLLOW

The member for Alberni complained that they were first making the agreements law and then going to the country afterwards. Surely he did not wish them to follow the example of Sir Wilfrid Laurier on the Reciprocity pact, or perhaps, he had a lingering hope that the result would be the same. He had also tried in a weak way

to suggest some injustice between the Mainland and Vancouver Island in this connection. He wished to know what had become of the ferry service promised in the Canadian Northern contract? He could only reply that any astute business man would refuse to build a ferry and keep it tied up at a wharf till the railway was built. When the railway was ready the ferry would be ready.

In this policy the Government was reaching out and anticipating the future. In this they were following the steps of the private investor, who did not allow his capital to remain idle, but put it out to use. They were not, however, borrowing or buying money to do it, but were simply loaning the credit of the Province. As a result of their last contract with the Canadian Northern Pacific, Mackenzie & Mann had since invested millions in this Province. They had bought up large tracts of timber, they had invested in railways and mines at Stewart. They had taken over the whaling industry and invested in salmon canneries; they had purchased the Dunsmuir coal mines. They had invested heavily in properties in and around New Westminster, and they must spend large sums in terminals in the City of Vancouver. But for their agreement with the Government these men might never have known of the money there was to be made in investments in coal, in fisheries, in lands and in mines in this Province. What applied to the Canadian Northern Pacific should apply to men like Foley, Welch and Stewart and those associated with them. As a result of this policy, valleys and areas yet untouched would be developed, and it would mean that prosperity greater than we had enjoyed in the past would be ours for the next twenty or thirty years under these arrangements. (Applause.)

The bill passed second reading without a division.